

SYSTEM AND METHOD FOR SWITCHING AND  
ROUTING DATA ASSOCIATED WITH A SUBSCRIBER COMMUNITY

ABSTRACT OF THE INVENTION

A system for switching and routing data associated with one or more subscribers within a subscriber community includes layer-2 switching functionality and an intermediate device, both within a first network access switch. The  
5 intermediate device is operable to receive data units from the layer-2 switching functionality and to selectively store first data units received by the intermediate device after layer-3 routing functionality has begun to process a data block comprising the first data units and before all other data units within the data block ahead of the first data units have been switched for communication and external  
10 device of layer 2 switching functionality of another network access switch.